

October 21, 1968

Dr. Joseph O. Falkinham
Department of Molecular Biology
University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

Dear Dr. Falkinham:

We have a very substantial archives on E. coli strains, and if you are interested in genealogical research I would urge you to come down here for a couple of days and work your own way through these files. If you have any specific questions I will be glad to answer them via this correspondence.

I believe we have been rather fussy in our experimental papers in describing the genealogy of our strains, and I am grateful that you are emphasizing the importance of perpetuating such traditions.

W1485 was isolated as a lambda-sensitive F^+ mutant from E. coli K-12. It is correctly characterized as F^+ . This was, I have to add, not a character known at the time of its isolation. Subsequently an F^- mutant, W2637, was isolated from it by passage through motility agar (reference 67). I do not know off-hand where to refer you to an explicit reference to this strain, and just do not remember whether we have published much on it, or its derivatives. W2637 was subsequently noticed to be a rather weak galactose fermenter, but a "full gal⁺" colony was noticed on EMB galactose and was reselected for further use as W3110. I trust you will appreciate it is very difficult to know whether the weak or the strong fermenting quality represented the clone from the immediate selection of the F^- mutant labeled W2637.

W2915 has the history indicated on the accompanying diagram.

I enclose a number of sheets of rather ancient history which may interest you. It has been about ten years since I have worked directly on E. coli genetics, but I think we can resuscitate answers to any specific questions that you may have and for which we had the information at the time.

I have made some other corrections to the best of my ability on a copy of your pedigrees.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

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files

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